

Articles 24 & 25, Village Center Rezoning 2012 Annual Town Meeting

On the 2012 Annual Town Meeting warrant, Articles 24 and 25 propose to do three things: 1) to add a new section (Article 16, Form-Based Zoning) to the Zoning Bylaw to establish general form-based designs for different zoning districts in Amherst, 2) to add form-based design regulations and amend other existing zoning regulations for Atkins Corners and North Amherst village center, and 3) to create new zoning districts in Atkins Corners and North Amherst village center, several of which apply form-based zoning regulations unique to these village centers.

Form-based zoning can take many forms, but it is basically an additional layer of design requirements that govern the final layout and “form” of development in a specific area. The community first decides what it wants an area to look like in the future. Form-based regulations are then crafted which guide development of individual properties so that they turn the community’s general vision into reality over time (see illustrative example below). Standard zoning regulations—zoning districts, permit requirements for different land uses, dimensional controls, parking, etc.—all still apply.

Interested citizens should watch the Town of Amherst website for further information. Copies of the proposed zoning as well as information about form-based zoning are available on the Zoning Subcommittee page of the Town website: www.amherstma.gov/zsc.

